

BOOK REVIEW

RURAL TOURISM - TREATY

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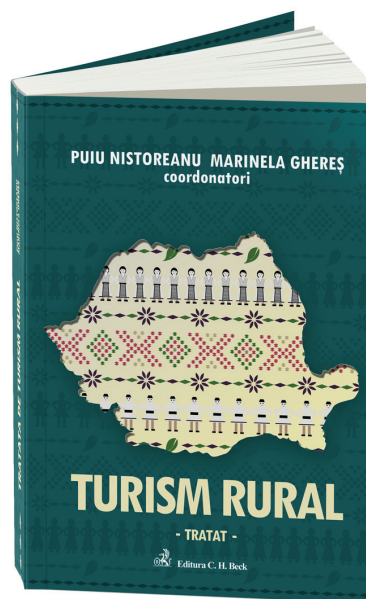
Even though a few decades ago was not much talked or wrote about rural tourism and agrotourism, two forms of tourism which, without doubt, have old roots, since there are rural settlements and since the most distant ancestors have agricultural concerns.

Life in the country has always had two faces, much or less the same. First, a rough picture of the peasant working the field, destined to earn the bread for himself and those around him with the sweat of his brow and the strength of his arms. The second side is the traditional painting of the village, not missing the image of handy peasants and beautiful women, rich fruits of the field and the loaded carts... The picture is often completed with the rustic splendor of gardens, which abound in both the abundance and beauty.

Naturally, there remained the rural attraction, especially for many inhabitants of towns, who love the image of the village and its environs.

How these two forms of tourism have evolved over time and where have rural tourism and agrotourism reached today in Romania and other countries in Europe and in the world? These are questions addressed by no less than eighteen specialists in tourism, prestigious academics from Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Pitesti, Arad, Sibiu and Suceava, in the treaty "Rural Tourism", at the publishing house "C. H. Beck" Bucharest, 2010.

The work is coordinated by Prof. Dr. Puiu Nistoreanu at the Department of Tourism Services - Faculty of Commerce of the Academy of Economic Studies and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marinela Ghereş from the Marketing Department - Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, together with the co-authors Prof. Dr. Ioan Plăiaş, Assoc. Prof. Dr. George Săvoiu, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lucian Florin Isac, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aurora Mirela Stanciu, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Victoria Firescu, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Iulian Vlad, lecturer Dr. Mariana Bănuţă, lecturer Dr. Sergiu Rusu, lecturer Dr. Viorel



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Craciunescu, Ph.D. ec. Danut Ungureanu attend. Dr. Remus Hornoiu, assist. Phd. Raluca Ciornea, assist. Phd. Ţaicu Marian, assist. Phd. Ovidiu Mihai Tănase, ec. Phd. Iuliana Pop ec. Alexandra Gogozan, team that gave birth to these real challenges for readers. With generosity and professionalism they had the inspiration to make available to those concerned about this field, their own research, multiple knowledge and information about rural tourism, and what arose incite and surprise with originality and the complexity of the approach, the large amount of research and solutions offered.

When a field of interest is so complex and exciting for any eye, mind and soul and so tempting, economically speaking, that even the most authentic manuscript couldn't compress it, it becomes absolutely necessary to write something which is the result of an optimum and well documented research.

Rural tourism-treaty integrates itself in topics of high interest and with major economic importance in recent decades, each chapter containing information carefully analyzed along with unprecedented information and new economic solutions able to provide new entrepreneurial directions of development in the Romanian rural space.

A research of national interest, Rural Tourism, aims to inventory and analyze the economic levers to point out the authenticity and quality of local products, drawing discreet the attention of services providers and entrepreneurs on the complexity and professionalism necessary to be competitive on the world tourism market. The detailed description regarding the information sent by the base information relating to rural symbolism (wood, time, space, human-animal relationship) to an original and depth research: economic theory, marketing of tourism, agrotourism on the economy market.

With the richness of content, rigor and acuity of the exposed observations, the paper provides a complete picture of the natural and anthropogenic specific tourism products. Although it is a collective work, the style of the approach, situated between scientific rigor and attractiveness of the literary work gives unity and captivate readers.

Structured in 14 chapters, the volume summarizes the current state of rural tourism in central, east and west Europe, and from other countries of the world, while focusing on the supply of rural tourism in Romania, the traditions and the possibilities of switching tradition to market offer. The literature of tourism and especially the problems of rural tourism devoted many papers on behalf of writers who are important points of reference today. Of these, we mention three figures that succeeded through hard work in their courses to include more than just information. We recall the book *Ecotourism and rural tourism*, the third edition, published by ASE publishing house, in 2006, having as coordinator prof. Dr. Puiu Nistoreanu, leading figure of the Romanian academic world. The author of numerous books on rural tourism and agrotourism, coordinator of many scientific articles on topics of great interest, laureate of "Alecsandru Puiu Tacu" award granted by the Economic and Social Research Institute "Gh. Zane" Iaşi, of the Romanian Academy in 2007, published the work mentioned above in collaboration with Gabriela Tigu, Delia Popescu and Mihaela Pădurean. The book deals with topics such as ecotourism, ecology, the protected areas in Romania and the complexity of rural tourism phenomenon.

Together with Professor Puiu Nistoreanu's book, another work forms the second pillar of support for this field. Rural tourism, European funds absorption, the sole author Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marinela Ghereş, opens the way towards a new approach of rural areas, through the economic levers that can be accessed by the entrepreneurs from tourism and rural

tourism field. The paper was published in 2009, at the publishing house Risoprint, Cluj-Napoca and completes more than two decades research in rural tourism of the author.

Another person that completes this trio of recognized authors. Vasile Glăvan publishes in 2003, Economic Publishing House Bucharest, a paper entitled *Rural Tourism. Agrotourism. Sustainable tourism. Ecotourism*, a specialty book, folded on the four main topics of interest, which otherwise form the title of the book. Along with Puiu Nistoreanu and Marinela Ghereș, manages to complete the specialty literature through books that impress the reader through the complex research methods recognized in the scientific world and not least because of the applicability and solutions offered to the Romanian business environment.

The book makes a contribution really impressive, not only because of the complexity of information, the book passes the limits of a simple course, the theme and style and scientific approach remains the quality of Rural Tourism - treaty. Devided in 14 chapters, this piece of work approaches, in ascending line, points like rural tourism in Central, Eastern and Occidental Europe, the rural village and its symbols (wood, time, space, human-animal bonds) and then going towards the economic side of this form of tourism (economic theories, agrotourism and the economy, marketing of rural products) along with ecological aspects, so important for sustainable tourism. This new approach offers all readers a whole new vision towards rural tourism. Without wanting to discredit the authors, we should mention two of the initiators of rural tourism in Romania, The Village Museum and The Peasant's Museum, symbols which lived through time due to personalities like Ernest Bernea, his son, Horea and all the others who brought their contribution to this field, by adding value.

The reviewed volume describes in each chapter, various topics of interest to the reader's curiosity, whether specialized or not. The first chapter deals with rural tourism in the Central and Eastern European countries and other countries of the world, showing differences and similarities of style. It's like you were putting a puzzle before you to build and the parts seem so different that you think is impossible to realize.

The Romanian village, that sacred entity reveals some of its mystery but leaves the reader to draw the final conclusions. The fact that the Romanian village was gradually transformed into a tourism product, there is no novelty. How this affects the village and everything it entails, remains a thread on which this paper wants to split into four.

Some would say that it passed to easily from the sacred to the commercial, which is true in the conditions of a changing world. But nevertheless, we must not forget the Romanians' feeling always happy receiving guests, a feeling that has played a decisive role in shaping a distinctive feature of the Romanian village: hospitality.

We were talking earlier about that wealth of information and the book's complexity that may contain the essence and something more. Here's how the treaty makes the transition from rural tourism, agrotourism and the controversial human-animal relationship. This is because we should not overlook the existence of a clear link between the two beings, a connection much stronger in rural areas.

The Romanian peasant's mentality is highlighted in this piece of work. Its nature is unique described in the presentation of two monuments of the Romanian rural space: The village museum and the peasant's museum. Here's how the Treaty of rural tourism goes beyond a

certain book, constantly sending invitations to knowledge, new to the reader. The time theme, addressed in two chapters, so complex, seeks to enlighten the reader of these pages by highlighting fundamental concepts, the alive time and the suspended time, very attractive through the its allure of the unknown.

Towards the end of the paper are discussed marketing issues of tourism products and sustainable tourism, two points with an interesting and unusual approach.

This treaty brings an interesting concept in discussion, that of new folklore, created by merging rural literature with scientific research. If until today, we couldn't have observed a possible link between folklore and Romania's rural economy, this treaty brings along new dimensions of rural tourism maintained by a number of elements that give identity, strength and continuity of our nation. We are therefore before a daring approach to a key area of undisputed cultural and scientific interest, since it aims at changing the mentality of a nation itself, to the greatest resource of development, namely the Romanian specificity remained too long under the veil of forgetfulness and ignorance. The treaty presents rural tourism like never seen before: original, exciting, mysterious, full of potential and giving the right methods through which all that has been promised in these pages, can come true.

Rural Tourism – Treaty has been designed on two dimensions, economic an folkloric: because of this it is beyond the pattern book of rural tourism, through the complexity and variety of information, addressing both the general public, the entrepreneur in rural tourism and especially economists, either students or university teachers from economic faculties.

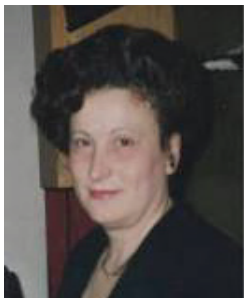
About the coordinators



Professor Puiu Nistoreanu, PhD. is a leading figure of the Academy of Economic Studies, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Commerce.

Fields of competence: Business administrations in tourism and services (management and marketing in tourism, business negotiation, the production and marketing of touristic services) Sustainable development and tourism (ecotourism, rural tourism), Cultural tourism. Author of: 25 books (7 author, 1 coordinator, 17 co-author), over 200 studies and scientific

articles (published in country and abroad), 20 research contracts. Laureate of "Alecsandru Puiu Tacu" award granted by the Economic and Social Research Institute "Gh Zane" Iași, of the Romanian Academy in 2007; The award "Laurels of the Economic Tribune 2004"; The award of tourism and Romanian writers association (AJTR): "The touristic book", 2000; ASE diploma: "Nicolae Georgescu-Roegen" for outstanding research in economic activity 1999, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007; ASE Diploma of excellence, Virgil Madgearu" for outstanding professional and scientific work as a docent, 2006.



Associate Professor Marinela Ghereș, PhD. is part of the Marketing Department research team of Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca.

She is the holder of the disciplines of Environmental Economics, Economics of natural resources, Economic and technical applications in the environmental field, Agrotourism, International Tourism, Service industries and rural economy, and Environmental and Agrofood projects.

The scientific research has resulted in 20 courses, books, monographs, 155 scientific papers and 17 research contracts.

The last representative editorials are: Environmental economics (2008) Rural tourism-absorption of EU funds (2009) Economic projects in the fields of food, environment and tourism (2009), The entrepreneurs' map in agrotourism (2010), Rural tourism-treaty (2010), Sustainable management of rural communities and tourism (2010).